

Message Text

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44

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SUBJ: CIVAIR - CONCORDE EIS

REF: PARIS 29721 R141603Z NOV 75

1. NATIONAL PRESS STRIKE ON NOV 14 FOLLOWED BY LIMITED REPORTING IN MEDIA OVER THE WEEKEND BEARS OUT REFTEL OBSERVATION OF UK PHLEGMATIC ACCEPTANCE OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN CONCMRDE EIS SAGA. TV AND RADIO REPORTS HAVE BEEN FACTUAL AND LOW KEY.

2. THE SUNDAY TIMES HEADED ITS ARTICLE "CONCORDE PASSES PAIN THRESHOLD". THE BULK OF THE STORY HAD TO DO WITH EXPLAINING DISCREPANCIES IN THE FIGURES GIVEN IN VARIOUS NOISE TESTS AT HEATHROW AS BEING TRACEABLE TO THE USE OF DIFFERENT LOCATIONS FOR THE VARIOUS NOISE MONITORS EMPLOYED. ONE SET OF READINGS TAKEN BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AIRCRAFT NOISE COUNCIL, WHICH REPRESENTS 52 LOCAL COUNCILS Affected BY HEATHROW NOISE, SHOWED THAT AT ITS WORST, CONCORDE WAS SEVEN TIMES LOUDER THAN THE LEGAL

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LIMIT AT HEATHROW AND PASSED THE THRESHOLD OF PAIN. IN

GENERAL THE COUNCIL CLAIMS CONCORDE IS THREE TIMES NOISIER ON TAKEOFF THAN THE BOEING 707. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO ASSERT THAT CONCORDE STILL HAS SOME POWERFUL FRIENDS IN WASHINGTON. IT SAYS THAT PRESIDENT FORD FAVORS GIVING CONCORDE LANDING RIGHTS AT DULLES AND JFK AIRPORTS. IT CONTINUES BY STATING THERE IS A STRONG FEELING IN THE WHITE HOUSE, REINFORCED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PLEADINGS, THAT THE U.S. SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE BLAME FOR BURYING THE CMNCORDE PROJECT. THE WHITE HOUSE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, "IT'S SURVIVAL SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY IT'S SUCCESS OR FAILURE, NOT BY AN ARBITRARY DECISION OF THE U.S." THE DECISION OF SECRETARY COLEMAN TO HOLD HEARINGS ON THE EIS IS SEEN TO MAKE IT UNLIKELY THAT CONCORDE OPPONENTS COULD USE PURELY PROCEDURAL GROUNDS TO CHALLENGE THE PLANE. IN ADDITION, A CONGRESSIONAL AMENDMENT TACKED ON TO A BILL PROVIDING FUNDS FOR AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION, WHICH WOULD PROHIBIT THE LANDING OF ALL SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT IN THE U.S. IS NOW LIKELY TO BE DEFEATED. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT THE LATEST EIS CONTAINS NOISE MEASUREMENTS WHICH ARE MUCH LESS FAVORABLE TO THE PLANE THAN THE DRAFT STATEMENT PRODUCED LAST SPRING. THIS IS SEEN TO STRENGTHEN THE RESOLVE OF THE ANTI-CONCORDE GROUPS IN THEIR FIGHT TO PREVENT THE SST FROM ENTERING THE U.S.

3. THE SUNDAY OBSERVER, WHICH LONG AGO ADOPTED AN ANTI-CONCORDE STANCE, MAKES USE OF THE HIGHER NOISE READINGS TO CONCLUDE THAT AT BEST THERE WILL BE ONLY A SEVERELY RESTRICTED SERVICE TO WASHINGTON ALLOWED WITH LITTLE HOPE FOR NEW YORK ENTRY. THIS OUTLOOK COUPLED WITH THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH LANDING RIGHTS AND OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES ON OTHER ROUTES CAUSES THE OBSERVER TO MAKE A PLEA FOR BRITAIN TO FACE FACTS AND REACH A DECISION ON CONCORDE. THE NEWSPAPER PURPOSES THAT THE UKG FIX A LIMIT ON BRITISH AIRWAYS OPERATING LOSSES RESULTING FROM CONCORDE, AND, IN ADDITION, HALT ALL WORK ON THE TWO REMAINING CONCORDES BEING BUILT BY BRITISH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION AT BRISTOL.

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